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Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn

From the Author of the Bestselling *for women only*

for

A Straightforward Guide to the Inner Lives of Women

men

 **Quick Start Guide** Included

only

REVISED AND UPDATED EDITION

Praise for
For Men Only

“You’ve got to read this book. Shaunti and Jeff eliminate the confusion that has kept far too many men from bridging the gender gap.”

—DRS. LES AND LESLIE PARROTT, best-selling authors
of *Love Talk*

“When we featured Shaunti’s book *For Women Only* on *Family-Life Today*, the phone rang off the hook! When Shaunti and Jeff come back on our broadcast, I’m buying some more phones. This is fresh and relevant—good stuff for every marriage. Read it!”

—DENNIS RAINEY, president, FamilyLife

“Once again Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn have unearthed a treasure chest of insights that are not only eyeopening but possibly life-changing.”

—ANDY STANLEY, North Point Ministries senior pastor
and best-selling author

“Most of my work helping passive Christian men become more like Jesus involves how best to relate to women. I’m going to make sure to keep a case of the Feldhahns’ excellent book handy at all times.”

—PAUL COUGHLIN, author, *No More Christian Nice Guy*
and *Married but Not Engaged*

“Men, we’re supposed to love our wives and live with them in an understanding way. That’s the clear assignment God gives each of us in the Scriptures. So buy this book, read it a couple of times, underline a few key ideas, and then keep it where you can review it regularly. It will help you be the husband God wants you to be.”

—BOB LEPINE, cohost, *FamilyLife Today*

“Recently, in our weekly couples’ study, we read and discussed both *For Women Only* and *For Men Only* over the course of several months. It was fascinating and very helpful. The findings in these books about how men and women think were so enlightening and led to some real revelations and ‘aha’ moments among the couples in the group. We think these books should be required premarital reading!”

—JEFF FOXWORTHY, comedian, and his wife, GREGG

for
men
only

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by Shaunti Feldhahn

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by Shaunti Feldhahn

For Young Men Only
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by Lysa TerKeurst and Shaunti Feldhahn

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by Shaunti Feldhahn

The Life Ready Woman
by Shaunti Feldhahn and Robert Lewis

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Details in some anecdotes and stories have been changed to protect the identities of the persons involved.

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*To our parents,
who taught us through their
example that working to
understand each other
is worth it.*

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RETHINKING RANDOM

*Why you need a new map
of the female universe*



Like some guys I know, you might be tempted to skip this introduction and jump right to the sex chapter. And if you're chuckling right now, it probably means you already did it. Or were about to. It's not a bad choice, actually. Just a little self-defeating. If you've been in a committed relationship with a woman for more than, say, a day, you know that going just for what you want isn't actually going to get you what you want for very long.

A week, maybe?

But let's be honest—one of the main reasons you're looking at this book is because you are trying to get something you want. Not sex (well, not just sex), but a more fulfilling, harmonious

relationship with your wife, one that isn't quite so hard or confusing. And the back cover gave you the wild idea that understanding her might actually be possible.

Either that or for some reason the woman in question just handed you this book.

Hmm.

Well, either way, take a look at the revelations we've uncovered. We think you'll be convinced. Each chapter explains things about the woman you love that may have often left you feeling helpless, confused, or just plain angry. Each chapter points out simple, doable solutions. The only genius required is that you make a decision up-front that you're willing to think differently. This is a short book, but if you read it cover to cover, you'll walk away with your eyes opened to things you may have never before understood about your wife or girlfriend.



Each chapter points out simple, doable solutions.

That's what happened with me—Jeff. And I'm just your average, semi-confused guy. (Actually, sometimes *totally confused* is more accurate.) And since we average, semi-confused guys have to stick together, that's why, even though Shaunti and I are both authoring this book, I'll be the one doing the talking.

FIRST, SOME BACKGROUND

In 2004 Shaunti published *For Women Only: What You Need to Know About the Inner Lives of Men*, which quickly became a best-seller. Based on nationally representative surveys, focus groups, personal interviews, and other research with thousands of men, it opened women's eyes to things that most of us guys had always wished our wife or girlfriend knew. Things like most of us need to feel *respected* even more than loved. Or that men, besides just getting enough sex, also have a huge need to feel sexually *desired* by their wives.

I'm not sure exactly why, but women everywhere were shocked. And by the flood of letters from around the country—from both women *and* their grateful husbands—Shaunti and I have seen how much good can come when the opposite sex finally has their eyes opened to things they simply didn't understand about us guys before.

In this book, the shock is on the other foot. Now it's their turn to exclaim to us, "I can't believe you didn't already know that!"

When Shaunti's publisher first approached us about doing a companion book to *For Women Only* to help men understand women, I had two major concerns. First, I didn't think guys would read a "relationship" book. For most of us, the last relationship

book we read was in premarital counseling—and only because we were forced to. But more to the point, I doubted that women could ever be understood. Compared to other complex matters—like the tides, say, or how to figure a baseball pitcher’s ERA—women seemed unknowable. Random even.



I’m not sure exactly why, but women everywhere were shocked by how men thought.

I explained my skepticism to one early focus group of women:

JEFF: Guys tend to think that women are random. We think, *I pulled this lever last week and got a certain reaction. But when I pulled that same lever this week, I got a totally different reaction.* That’s random!

WOMAN IN GROUP: But we aren’t random! If you pull the lever and get a different reaction, either you’re pulling a different lever or you’re pulling it in a different way.

SHAUNTI: What men need is a sort of map to their wives or girlfriends. Because we *can* be mapped. We can be known and understood—firm ground.

JEFF: Uh, no. See, guys think of a woman as a swamp. You can't see where you're stepping, and sooner or later you just know you're going to get stuck in quicksand. And the more you struggle to get free, the deeper you get sucked in. So every guy on the planet knows that the best thing to do is just shut down and not struggle and hope somebody comes along to rescue you.

When I came to, Shaunti and the other women in the focus group assured me—and I have since seen for myself—that guys don't have to live in a swamp. That realization led us to the eventual subtitle of this book: *A Straightforward Guide to the Inner Lives of Women*.



“Guys think of a woman as a swamp: You can't see where you're stepping, and sooner or later you just know you're going to get stuck in quicksand.”

We have been astounded and humbled at the reaction to these simple, eyeopening truths. In fact, the book you are holding is actually the second edition of this book—which is needed because there was clearly a desire for this ongoing research.

Both *For Women Only* and *For Men Only* sparked a huge

wave of encouragement and hope among ordinary men and women just like me and Shaunti, selling more than 1.5 million copies in twenty-two languages. We were flooded with e-mails and comments from men and women at our marriage conferences, saying things like “This saved my marriage” and “After ten years together, I finally know how to make my wife happy” and even “Jeff, I owe you one, buddy.”

But since we’ve continued to learn new things, we also wanted to keep the book current. For this new edition, we have included some fascinating new findings, including the brain science behind *why* women sometimes think as they do. Plus we’ve added a new chapter—“She’s Not Making Sense”—that decodes those unpredictable reactions that she thinks of as, uh, normal.

After seeing the impact of this research, I realize that we really did uncover life-changing insights. Surprising truths that average guys like me *need* to hear from an average guy and be encouraged that if someone like me can learn it and do it, they can too.

THE SEVEN REVELATIONS

So let’s go back to that swamp—the one we think is there but doesn’t really exist. The most important key to “de-swamping” the woman in your life is to realize that some of your basic assumptions about her may be either too simplistic or flat-out wrong. By simplistic, I mean that men tend to operate with a

partial or surface understanding of their wives or girlfriends. And to make matters worse, most guys have no idea how to make their limited understanding work in actual practice.

For example, most guys have heard that women want security. Okay. But what does that mean, exactly? A regular paycheck? A big house? It's a huge shocker to talk to hundreds of women and find that while financial security is nice for a woman, it isn't nearly as important to her as feeling emotionally secure—feeling close and confident that her man will be there for her no matter what. And believe it or not, ensuring emotional security turns out to be a lot easier than ensuring the financial security you are probably busting your tail to provide.

For Men Only will help you move from surface understandings to the all-important recognition of what those things mean in everyday life with your woman. Once you start testing these findings, you'll be amazed at the difference it makes for both of you. Because—brace yourself—you will realize that you *can* understand your wife *and* make her happy.



You will realize that you can understand your wife and make her happy.

Sound wildly impossible? I'll go one better. You'll see that this huge shift can happen for you and the woman you love *even if it starts out as a totally one-sided effort on your part.*

The second edition of *For Men Only* is organized around seven major findings outlined below. Some of these will be surprises to you. Some won't, at least to begin with. (But that's the thing about swamps—what you see is rarely what is really there.)

HOW WE FOUND OUT: OUR METHODOLOGY

In our initial research for this book, Shaunti and I worked for a year to identify inner “map terrain” areas that are common to most women but that most guys tend not to understand. Besides conducting hundreds of in-person interviews, we gathered huge amounts of anecdotal information at dozens of women's events where Shaunti was presenting materials from *For Women Only*. I spoke with stay-at-home moms, business owners, and secretaries, and on airplanes, in focus groups, and over Shaunti's book table while she was being mobbed at women's conferences. I sifted through hundreds of e-mails and forum postings from Shaunti's forwomenonlybook.com website.

In all these venues, I was the “embedded male.” Like the reporters who rode with the armored cavalry divisions at the opening of the Iraq War, I kept my helmet on, my head down, and my notebook handy.

After all that research, we did a scientific, nationally representative survey. As Shaunti had done for her previous book, we

Our Surface Understanding	What That Means in Practice
She needs to feel loved	Even if your relationship is great, your mate likely has a fundamental insecurity about your love—and when that insecurity is triggered, she may respond in ways that confuse or upset you until she feels reassured.
Women are emotional	Women deal with multiple thoughts and emotions from their past and present all the time, at the same time—and these can't be easily dismissed.
She's impossible to figure out	There's a logical reason for nearly everything a woman says and does—and actions that confuse or frustrate you are often signals of a need she is asking you to meet
Women want security—in other words, financial security.	Your woman needs emotional security and closeness with you so much that she will endure financial insecurity to get it.
She doesn't want you to fix it; she just wants you to listen	When she is sharing an emotional problem, her feelings and her desire to be heard are much more important than the problem itself.
She doesn't want sex much—which means she must not want me.	Physically, women tend to crave sex less often than men do—and it is usually not related to your desirability
She wants to look attractive.	Inside your smart, secure wife lives a little girl who deeply needs to know that you find her beautiful—and that you only have eyes for her.

worked with survey-design expert Chuck Cowan, former chief of census design for the U.S. Census Bureau, and the well-respected survey company Decision Analyst. They came together to help us design and conduct a groundbreaking survey of four hundred women from all over the country. Since then, we've done other surveys. Adding it all up, well over six thousand women provided input for this book.



I was the “embedded male.” I kept my helmet on, my head down, and my notebook handy.

I know you'll be fascinated by the results. While some of the findings may be challenging or difficult to accept, most men have been surprised by how helpful many of these truths are and how *simple* they are to implement for a better, easier relationship, a happy wife (or girlfriend), and more peace in their home.

THE MAP KEY

Before we tackle the findings, here are some pointers on reading the map:

- **This book holds to a biblical worldview.** Our aim is to be relevant and revealing, no matter what your worldview is, and we surveyed women regardless of cultural background or religious beliefs. But thou-

sands of churches now require our books before a couple gets married. And because Shaunti and I view life through our Christian faith, we have seen that these findings are consistent with biblical principles. We believe that relationships are most fulfilling when both people have a common commitment to serving Jesus. Since our focus is on what we learned through research, we do not quote heavily from Scripture, but we draw from and reference it as the only dependable guidebook for relationships.

- **This is not a comprehensive marriage book.**

Since there are already many great marriage books on the market, there's no need to cover topics that other experts can tackle far better than we can or that guys already have a good handle on. (We list several recommended resources at our website, formenonlybook.com.) Instead, we focus specifically on high-leverage surprises—truths that men don't tend to get, where small, simple changes can have huge impacts. Also, while our content is probably a bit more targeted toward married men, these insights will be helpful for any male-female relationship. That said, if your relationship is seriously on the rocks, this little book will probably open your eyes in some important areas, but it is

not designed to cover a crisis situation. We encourage you to get the kind of counsel and support your marriage deserves.

- **This is not an equal treatment.** Just as *For Women Only* was intentionally one-sided (and if your wife read it, you may have benefited from that fact), so is this book. Yes, you have needs too, and there certainly may be relationship issues arising because *she* doesn't understand *you*. But *For Women Only* addresses many of those, and this book is not about them. This is only about the inner lives of women, and we're focusing entirely on how men relate to women, not the other way around. (That is also why the survey polled only heterosexual women.)
- **There are exceptions to every rule.** Recognize that when I say "most women" appear to think a certain way, *most* does not mean *all*. We make generalizations out of necessity to be helpful in the widest number of circumstances. Inevitably there will be exceptions. Statistically, in fact, it is likely that some male readers will think in a way similar to their wife in one area or another. Everyone is an individual, so the goal is to have your eyes open for what is most important in *your* situation.

- **Our findings may not be politically correct, but we try to be true to the evidence.** For six years, Shaunti was a newspaper columnist on women's issues, and she sometimes received e-mails from women complaining that she was doing exactly what we intend to do in this book—making generalizations about women. Add the fact that I, as a *guy*, am daring to make those generalizations, and we recognize the potential for controversy. We don't quite know how to get around that, so we decided to just report what we learned.



We decided to just report what we learned.

THE THING TO DO NEXT

We think that in the pages ahead you're going to receive a lot of promising invitations to try some new things. Most are incredibly simple, but they may not come naturally. At least at first. Of course, if all this were already instinctive to you, then you wouldn't be troubled by randomness, confusion, or frustration... and did I mention swamps?

My encouragement to you: Give the process time as you retrain years of incorrect assumptions and counterproductive

reactions. Bring a humble attitude. Be willing to practice. Believe it can be done. Because I've learned that it can be.

After several months as an embedded male, I was watching a movie with Shaunti one night. Halfway through, I casually mentioned that I didn't like the way one of the female characters was treating another. Shaunti sat up on the couch, grinned, and said, "You're thinking like a girl!"

Now, she meant it as high praise, but in the small midwestern town where I grew up, that kind of talk could get a guy slugged. But then I realized: maybe I *had* learned a valuable thing or two about the female universe just by listening in.

Here's hoping that you do too.



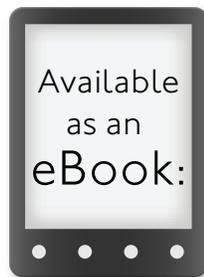
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